

George, Prince of Hawaii

Catherine Stauder

The discovery of a prince of Hawaii in Boston in the late Spring of 1816 was the subject of news stories throughout New England. He was reported to be the son of "Tamoree" (Kaumualii), king of Kauai. Furthermore, he claimed to be a hero in the American navy. And to make the news of even more interest to the religious press, he was asking to be included in the education program of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, eventually to return to his father's land to be of service.

The cautious editor of the *Religious Intelligencer* introduced him:

In our former numbers, we have given a short sketch of the Natives of Owhyhee [Hawaii] which are now in this country. . . . There are some interesting facts, relating to this subject, which are yet to be explained, and we trust will soon be laid before the public. We are told that the King of one of the Sandwich Isles, intrusted his Son to the care of an American Captain, 8 or 9 years since, to be brought to this country, for the purpose of being educated; the object for which he was sent, has not yet been attended to. On his arrival, the young Prince was stationed in the character of a servant, and compelled to labour for his support. At length he left his place of residence, and enlisted on board the *Guerriere* Frigate, and went on a cruise. He has lately returned to Boston, where he is now wishing to obtain the means of an education. The Editor cannot vouch for the truth of the foregoing statement.

If we are rightly informed, the Society for Foreign Missions, have made much enquiry after this young Prince; and we hope they will speedily make an investigation of this subject, that our Christian name may not be a stumbling block to the Heathen, who are beginning to enquire after the God we worship.

The following letter is from one of the natives of Owhyhee, now in Boston; he has been in this country several years, and is a professed disciple of the Lord Jesus. We give the letter as it was written, verbatim.

Boston, May 30, 1816

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*Engraved New Haven, 1822, by N. and S. S.
Jocelyn from a painting by S. F. B. Morse*

GEORGE PRINCE TAMOREE
Son and heir of King Kaumualii of Kauai

Dear Henry Obookiah, I embrace this blessed hour to write a few lines,. . . I have the pleasure seen the young prince, at Charlestown, (now live with Mr. Lewis Deblois the Pusser of the Navy,) i examine him who he was he answer the king son of attoi, i ask him if he remember his father name, he said his father name Tammaahmaah but he hath forgot his tongue entirely, he been absend 9 years, been school at (Pittsburg and Worcester) and he can read very well, and Writing Cypher &c. i think this is the very young man been looking for, he has been in states service he was listed board the *Guerere* Frigate from New York. I ask him if he would like to be educated, he said he would be glad with his heart. he is about 18 years old good looking light hair if you want him to come to receive instruction you better let me know soon as you can for he want to come. . . .

FENJM COFHOA

A Boston newspaper, *The Recorder*, on Sept. 24, 1816, reported the meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Hartford at which it was determined to establish a school at Cornwall, Connecticut, for the education of heathen youth and added:

One of the Owhyeeans is a Prince, the son of a King of one of the Sandwich Islands. He was discovered a few weeks since in Boston, and sent on to join his companions in Connecticut. . . .

George's activities at this time may be followed in the columns of the *Religious Intelligencer*:

Our readers will doubtless recollect, that in a former number, we made mention of a young prince from one of the Sandwich Islands who was supposed to be on board the *Guerriere* frigate, then at Boston. The young man alluded to was brought to this place a few weeks since, by the Rev. Dr. Morse; and is now placed at Guilford, under the instruction of Rev. Mr. Vaill. While in New Haven, the kind attention of a few Samaritan ladies (who did not content themselves by saying, "be ye clothed, &c.") had a very perceptible effect upon his feelings and his character—his mind having been long depressed, by thinking what his state was, and what it should have been, seemed to resume, with much modesty, its native cheerfulness and dignity. The following letter has since been written to one of the respected ladies, who acted the part of a mother to this stranger in a foreign land. We publish it, not from any particular merit there is in it; but as the first essay of a child in knowledge. We give it, that the Christian public may judge for themselves, whether their charities, bestowed on these interesting young men, will be lost or not.

North Guilford, Oct. 1, 1816

Hon. & Dear Madam,

You was so kind as to request me to let you know where I was going to live,

I have undertook to let you know the situation I am in. At this present time I am studying with the Rev. Mr. Vaill. He treats me very kindly and wishes me to seek after religion, and get a good education and return to my country again. I hope I shall not meet with the hardships that I have been through for a few years past. We thank Providence that I have fallen into the hands of Christians. I hope it will be provided so that I can go back to my country and do good among the people. Here is one my countrymen lives with me. His name is John Hoonoore [John Honolii], he says that he wants religion. I believe we are in a fair way of getting it, if we try for it. But if we do not try we must not expect it. I have seen Obookiah. You told me to tell him to write to you and let you know how he proceeds in his learning. I am now learning the Owhyhee language. This friend that lives here with me is a great benefit to me, for he can learn me the Owhyhee language. I can learn him the English language. I hope we shall prosper and be prepared for another world. I think it is time for me to begin to think of these things. We have got to leave the world sooner or later. I think it will be better for me to stay here a few years longer than to return to my country as I was going in the ship Congress, a ship of the Navy. I should have been on my passage now if I had not come here with Doctor Morse. I am very glad I did not go. I think it will be better for me and for my father to stay here and receive a good education than to go back in the situation I was going in. I hope I shall be a benefit to my father if I should ever return. I hope it will be provided so that I may return again, but I must seek after God. . . . Hon. and Dear Madam, this is the first letter I ever wrote to a friend, and I hope it is not the last one. I write this with great pleasure, and I hope I shall receive one from you in a few days. Mr. Vaill has put an addition to my name, it is George Prince Kummooree, this is my father's name and we thought if ever should return back again it would be better for to have my fathers than to have an English name. . . .

GEORGE P. KUMMOOREE²

George apparently was unaware that the *Congress* on which he said he "should have been on my passage" was not bound for his country. During the spring and summer of 1816 the *U.S.S. Congress* was at Boston fitting out for an extensive cruise to the Carribbean and South America. She departed Boston on November 16, 1816, operated in the West Indies and off the northern coast of South America and returned to Hampton Roads in September 1817.³

The addition of a Hawaiian name to his English name for future identification was ironic. His father preferred the English "King George"⁴ and had adopted that name, bestowing the names of the British royal family, beginning with the Prince of Wales, on his progeny. Kaumualii's information about the members of the British family, however, came from English sailors residing on Kauai, and as they were not too knowledgeable, the Kauai family did not follow the nomenclature closely.⁵

The *Religious Intelligencer* account of the "George story" concluded with an extract from his tutor's letter:

North Guilford, Oct. 2, 1816

Astonished myself at the production of young Kummooree, I thought it proper to give you a testimonial of its genuiness. I have corrected nothing except the spelling. I need not remark to you the ingenuity of his pen, it is self-apparent. In mildness of temper, and of manners, he comes not behind his brethren. Should his life be spared, and should he become pious, he will be a bright acquisition to the school, and proposed mission to his countrymen at home. My two heathen scholars are well devoted to their studies, and I see nothing in the way of their becoming at a future time instruments of usefulness.⁶

Both of these letters were circulated widely in the religious papers of the time, and the story of the Hawaiian prince spread throughout New England.

The *Recorder* of November 12, 1816, called attention to the incorrect spelling of George Prince Kummooree's name. It should have been written Tamoree. The paper also reported the arrival of Captain Samuel Edes of the *Beverly* in Boston on November 7, 1816. He had visited Kauai and seen King Tamoree, who had inquired about his son.

Captain Edes told of a thrilling rescue. Captain John Ebbets of the ship *Enterprise*, from New York, was at Waimea in February 1816 when he lost all anchors but one in a gale. In the height of the storm, Kaumualii sent a boat with a large anchor to him, enabling Ebbets to ride out the blow. The editor concluded with "the pitch":

An American ship, and the lives of several American seamen have thus been preserved by the humane exertions of King Tamoree. Let every American then remember that Tamoree has a son in this country, that for several years past he has been enduring all the hardships attendant upon the life of a common sailor on board our frigates; that he fought in several of our battles during the late war, and was badly wounded: that he has recently been taken under the protection of the American Board of Commissioners, and sent to Connecticut to be educated, with view to his return to his native country. We trust that when our countrymen are called upon to contribute for the education of Heathen Youth, these facts will not be forgotten.

How can we better manifest our gratitude to the father, than by restoring to him under such circumstances his long lost son.

How opportune the arrival of Edes with evidence of Kaumualii's generosity, just when funds were being solicited for the school at Cornwall.

The story continued to grow with a thrilling tale which appeared on November 26, 1816 in *The Recorder*—George's letter to his father—but first the editor had a word:

GEORGE PRINCE TAMOREE

We have collected the following facts respecting this interesting young man. George is the son of Tamoree, King of Atooi, one of the Sandwich islands. When he was about seven years old, his father committed him to the care of the Captain of an American ship, who agreed to bring him to America, to procure him an education, and to return him to his father. To defray the expenses of his education, Tamoree gave the Capt. several thousand dollars.* After the vessel arrived in America, George went with the Capt. to Worcester, where he remained at school, till the property was all expended, and shortly after the Capt. died. He was then removed from one family and placed to another in the neighborhood of Worcester, till at length becoming dissatisfied with his situation, he came to Boston and enlisted in the Navy. The first vessel in which George served was the *Enterprize*. He was in this vessel in the action with the *Boxer*, in which he was badly wounded. He was afterwards on board the *Guerriere*, in the action with the Algerine frigate. After the war ended, George was again thrown upon the world; and without any means of obtaining a livelihood, or any one to care for him, ragged, dirty, and in want, he was again enlisted, and employed as a servant to the Purser of the Navy-yard, in Charlestown. In this situation the Rev. Dr. Morse, having obtained some knowledge of his history, procured his release, and took him under his protection to New Haven, in Connecticut, at the time of the public commencement in Sept. last. Here he was received with the utmost kindness into the family of the Rev. President Dwight, and provided with clothes, and every thing that could render him contented and comfortable. At the meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Hartford, on the week after Commencement, George's case was brought before them, and they resolved to take him under their patronage, to give him such an education as shall qualify him for usefulness, and then to send him to his father. In pursuance of this resolution, George is now in Litchfield county, in Connecticut, in company with four others of his countrymen, all of whom are pursuing their studies in the school for heathen youth, recently established by the Board, and are expected to return in a few years, as missionaries or teachers to their native country.

George is represented to be of a mild and forgiving temper. In conducting the business with which he has been occasionally entrusted, he has discovered much intelligence, as well as the strictest honesty. And amid all the temptations with which he was surrounded, while a common sailor in the Navy, he never became addicted to any vice. For several days after his arrival in New Haven, his countenance indicated a depression of spirits, reserve and distrust, to which in his former situation he had probably been accustomed. This appearance, however, gradually

* George says the mate of the vessel told him 7 or 8,000. [Footnote from original.]

vanished, and he has now become frank and cheerful, and his conversation abounds not only with remarkable good sense but even with the finest wit. The following letter from George to his father will serve as a specimen of his composition. The original from which we copied it, is written in a plain, legible hand. It will be remembered that George is but seventeen years old. He has been in this country ten years.

*To Kummooreeo, *King of Atoway, one of the Sandwich Islands*

Guilford, Conn. (U. S. A.) Oct. 19, 1816

Hon. and Dear Father,—I have undertook to let you know how I have been treated since I left your habitation. I was neglected very much by the man you sent me with; after we came to America, the Capt. Rowin became very temperate and exposed with the property you sent with him for my education and I have had to shirk for myself; after I left you I came to Providence in America, and then I went to Boston in America and lived a year or two, and then I went to Worcester in the State of Massachusetts, in America, and there I lived with the Capt. Rowin about two years. I lived with him till he spent the property, and then he put me into the hands of Capt. Cotting, of Worcester, and then I went to Fitchburg, a town in the State of Massachusetts, and I lived with him till he became very poor, and then I thought I would seek for my own liveing rather than to live with him, and then I went to Boston and listed in the U. States servis, and I shipped on board the Brig *Enterprize*, in order to go and fight with the Englishmen. After I went on board I went to sea then, and I was about thirty days from land before we meet the enemis that we wear seeking after. We came to an Action in a few minutes after we hove in sight. We fought with her abought an hour, and in the mean time, I was wounded in my right side with a boarding pike, which it pained me very much. It was the blessing of God that I was kept from Death. I ought to be thankful that I was preserved from Death. I am going to tell you more of my being in other parts of the world. I then was drafted on board the U. S. Ship *Guerrier*. I went then to the Streats of Mediterranean. I had a very pleasant voyage up there, but was not there long before we fell in with the barbarous turks of Algiers. But we come to an action in a few minutes after we spied these people, we fought with them about three hours, and took them and brought them up to the city of Algiers, and then I came to Tripoly, and then I came to Naples, and from thence I came to Gibaralter, and then I came back to America. And now I am in a good way of getting a good education. But I want to see you very much. I hope I shall come and be with you the rest of my life, but if I dont see you in this world, I trust I shall see you in the world to come, and then we shall speak face to face. I may come and be with thee but it will not be but a few days before I shall come and be with thee. I hope I shall be a benefit to you. You must not expect yet awhile, but if God spares my life I shall be there in a few years.

I am your affectionate Son,

GEORGE PRINCE KUMMOOREE

* We have printed this name as it is spelt by George. We are assured, however, by respectable authority, that it should be spelt *Tamoree* or *Tammoree*. [Footnote from original.]

A contemporary account of the Sandwich Islands follows George's letter.

SANDWICH ISLANDS

We have conversed with a gentleman who has recently returned from the Pacific Ocean. He states that it is not correct, as has been reported, that Tamaamah has conquered all the Sandwich Islands. Atooi, which is at one extreme of the groupe and is more than 300 miles from Owhyee where Tamaamah resides, still preserves its independence. It is true, that Tamoree went down several years since, and made a surrender of his island to Tamaamah; but he has since thought better of it, and has concluded not to yield without a struggle. Our informant represents Tamaamah to be an artful, sagacious man, and extremely avaricious. He wants every thing he sees. He is continually soliciting presents from the Europeans, who visit him, and dislikes giving any thing in return. Tamoree, on the contrary, is a generous, noble-minded man. He cannot be prevailed upon to accept of any thing without returning an equivalent. We have already recorded an instance of his humanity in sending his boat in the midst of a heavy gale, to the assistance of an American vessel, in distress, and which was the means of saving her from shipwreck. This anecdote is a correct illustration of his character. Tamoree is the rightful sovereign of all the Sandwich islands. Tamaamah is an usurper. Tamaamah has no vessels of more than eight or ten tons burthen. He is anxious, however, to purchase a ship for the purpose, it is supposed, of invading Atooi. Tamoree also wishes to buy a ship. Tamaamah is about 60 years old, and appears much broken. Tamoree is, in his prime, 45 years old. We are thus minute, because as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions will probably fix upon these islands for one of their missionary stations, it has rendered every thing which relates to them unusually interesting. From this statement it appears not improbable that George moy, at some future day, be King of Atooi, if not all the Sandwich Islands. We cannot but notice that in casting this young prince upon our shores, and in all the circumstances of the case, the hand of Providence seems to be pointed in a remarkable manner to the Sandwich islands as a proper field for our missionary exertions. It may be added too, that the share which George has had in the battles which have given us so much naval reputation, and the humanity which his father has manifested to our countrymen in distress, will be considered as giving such a mission a very peculiar claim upon the charity of Americans.

A bit more drama elaborating George's story is given in the *Missionary Register* of London:

... He was in the engagement between the *Enterprize* and *Boxer*, was one of the boarders, and while in the act of boarding received a wound in the side from a pike. The British sailor who gave the wound was about to renew the thrust, when he was disabled and slain by an American who stood by the side of the Prince,

He afterward went on board the *Guerriere* frigate; and was with Commodore Decatur in the Mediterranean, where he was in an engagement with an Algerine frigate. When he returned from the Mediterranean, he was providentially found in the navy-yard at Charlestown.⁷

The documented facts concerning George's service in the American Navy—this service which should merit "a very peculiar claim upon the charity of Americans."—tell a far different story from that given in these accounts.

The first battle in which George claimed participation was the engagement between the *Enterprise* (American) and the *Boxer* (British). This took place September 5, 1813 off Portland, Maine. The name "George Prince" is not on the muster roll of the vessel, nor is it on the list of ten wounded.⁸

His description of the action is not confirmed by official reports. George reported being at sea about thirty days from land before the enemy was encountered, engaging in action a few minutes after sighting, and being wounded in his right side with a boarding pike. The surviving senior officer of the *Enterprise*, Edward R. McCall, reported that the vessel left Portsmouth on Sept. 1, 1813, and on the morning of Sept. 5 sighted the *Boxer*. At three P.M., after reconnoitering, the *Enterprise* ran down with intent to bring to close action. At twenty minutes after 3 P.M., when within half pistol shot, the firing commenced from both vessels. It was "warmly kept up" and about 4 P.M. the *Boxer* surrendered; she was a wreck. The *Enterprise* escorted the *Boxer* into the Portland harbor. The crew of neither ship boarded the other during the battle.⁹

The name "George Prince" does appear on the *Enterprise* muster roll, but not until June 19, 1815, at Boston, almost two years after the battle in which he claimed to have taken part. He was No. 68 on the roll and signed on as a "landsman."¹⁰ At this time Commander William Bainbridge was fitting out a naval squadron to attack the Algerian pirates in the Mediterranean; the *Enterprise* was one of the ships in his squadron. It sailed from Boston, July 3, 1815, and arrived in the Mediterranean after Decatur's squadron, with the *Guerriere* as flagship, had defeated the enemy. Again, George missed the battle.

The *Enterprise* visited a number of Mediterranean ports in a show of strength and returned to America, arriving at Newport, November 15, 1815. The *Guerriere* had arrived at New York, November 12, 1815. George transferred to the *Guerriere* in New York December 12, 1815, muster roll No. 944, still a "landsman."¹¹ About two months

later, he transferred to the Boston Navy Yard, Charlestown, Mass., muster roll No. 367,¹² and is listed as No. 449 on March 14, 1816. George was on board both vessels but not at the time they engaged in battle. His discharge is dated September 27, 1816, still a "landsman."¹³

Although there is no contemporary record of anyone disputing George's claim to be a naval hero, a dissenting voice concerning the other parts of his story was heard in mid-December 1816, after George's letter had appeared in many New England papers.

To the Editor of the *Massachusetts Spy*.

Sir:—Observing in your paper of the 4th inst. an article copied from the *Boston Record*, with a letter from George Prince Tamoree, (so called) to his father; and the circumstances of the young lad having excited considerable publick and individual attention; I crave the privilege, in justice to Capt. Rowan, to the publick and to myself, to correct, through your paper, some of the mistatements which are therein made.

The assertion that Rowan received several thousand dollars to defray the expenses of the education of the lad, is wholly without foundation.—Immediately on his arrival in Boston, George was brought to Worcester, and placed under my care in a subscription school, in which I was then engaged. Rowan then stated to me that the boy was six years old, and that he had been two years with him on the water. This would make him four years of age when he left his native island.—George appeared to possess no recollection of his native language, nor could he pronounce so much as a syllable of English. From these circumstances, and the size of the lad at the time, it is highly probable that Rowan's statement was correct. George must, therefore, have been too young to recollect any thing either transacted between his father and Rowan, or said upon the subject by the mate while on his passage. He never made any mention of the circumstance while he was with me. On the contrary, the mate, now Capt. Davis of Boston, declared to me that Rowan never received any thing, and he considered the report as vulgar and idle tale. Rowan is not dead, but still living, for aught that is known to the contrary. Mrs. Rowan died soon after their marriage. This with other circumstances, occasioned, it is true, such a reverse in the prospects of Capt. Rowan, as put it out of his power any longer to superintend the education of the lad. From this situation, at the earnest desire of Rowan, I consented to receive the boy into my care.

It is not true that George was very much neglected by Capt. Rowan; but he was treated with great kindness and attention, until a reverse in his situation rendered this impossible. I rejoice at the favourable turn in the fortunes of the lad, but regret that his new friends should have encouraged and aided him in addressing a letter to his father, so unfounded in many of its statements and devoid of gratitude for a single favour received during ten years of residence among a Christian people.

During his continuance under my care, a period of six or seven years, no

means were spared to give the young Prince all the advantages of education which the publick schools, in the various situations where he was placed, afforded. For the truth of this I may appeal to the letter of George, which is presented to the publick as "a specimen of his composition," and the "plain legible hand" in which it is written. For these advantages George has no human being to thank, excepting Capt. Rowan and myself. After he had been with me about three years, advised thereto by many respectable characters, I petitioned the State Legislature, at their session in the winter of 1811, to receive George under their patronage. The expense of this was defrayed by the generosity of some persons in Fitchburg. The only notice taken of my petition was to permit it to lie under the table.

The situation of George has excited a general sympathy wherever he has resided; and his friends in this quarter will be pleased to hear, that he has retained those virtuous habits and principles in which he has been instructed in various families where he has been placed, amid the numerous temptations with which he has since been surrounded.

Leominster, Dec. 9, 1816.

SAMUEL COTTING

P.S. I have papers in my possession, subscribed by the most respectable characters in this section of the country, certifying the expenses incurred by me for three years in boarding and schooling Prince George, and for nursing and doctoring, during a severe illness which attacked him in the winter of 1811. For these expenses I have never received any indemnity.¹⁴

In publishing Cotting's letter, the editor stated that he had personal knowledge of many of the facts and he gave "unhesitating belief" to the rest of the comments.

Cotting's statement that he petitioned the State Legislature is correct; his petition read:

To the Honorable Senate and the Honorable House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in general Court assembled.

The petition of Samuel Cotting of Fitchburg in the county of Worcester in said Commonwealth, humbly shews.

That some four or five years since one Capt. James Rowan then master of a vessel sailing from the Sandwich Islands to New England took on board the eldest son and heir apparent to the prince of said Isles by his consent for the purpose of acquainting him with the arts, literature and enjoyments of the inhabitants of the American States—that said Rowan for a short time & until his reduced circumstances rendered him unable, placed this young lad then about six years old, at school; that about three years ago said Rowan requested your petitioner to take and educate the boy with a promise of remuneration; your petitioner did accordingly take said boy and bestowed upon him boarding, and schooling and much medical attention during the past winter he then being visited with illness. Your petitioner further states that said Rowan is wholly unable to compensate him for his said attentions, that he himself is unable any longer to continue them, and prays your honorable body to receive said lad and recovery him to his native

place, or dispose of him as you may deem proper, and further to make such remunerations to your petitioner as in your wisdom and liberality you may consider him entitled to . . .

Fitchburg May 28, 1810

SML. COTTING¹⁵

An account appearing in 1818 seems to offer a logical explanation of events in George's life.

For a season after Captain R. [owan] retired to the country, the Prince, whom he took with him, was provided with suitable accommodations and instruction; but, in the issue, he was left without any means of support, in the house of his preceptor [Cotting], who was in indigent circumstances, and wholly unable to keep him without compensation. From kindness, however, to the boy, and in expectation that some provision would be made for him, he would not cast him off; but gave him the same advantages, and treated him in the same manner, that he had before done. But the preceptor soon left the business of schoolkeeping, and removed to a neighbouring town, where he followed the occupation of a joiner. He took the Prince with him; and, as he was unable to keep him in school, he employed him in labouring at his trade. Here the Prince continued till the spring of 1813; when, becoming discontented with his situation, he left his master and went to a neighbouring town. With respect to the person who had been his instructor and patron, there is reason to believe, that he treated him with the utmost kindness so long as he lived with him; and expended a considerable sum of money upon him, for which he has not been remunerated.

George next engaged himself to a farmer, in whose service, so far as can be ascertained, he laboured hard, and received much harsh treatment, with a bare subsistence. Here he continued till May or June, 1815; when he absconded, from what he viewed, and as may be believed with good reason, the hand of oppression.

George directed his course to Boston, for the purpose, as it is supposed, of embracing the first favourable opportunity of returning to his own country.

About this time, his case became known to some benevolent persons, who had interested themselves in behalf of his country men; and search was made for him in Boston, but without success. At the end of two years, he was discovered in the navy yard at Charlestown, near Boston, by Benjamin Carhooa, a pious Owhyhean, resident in Boston.¹⁶

This report indicates that George was working for a farmer at the time of the engagement between the *Enterprise* and the *Boxer*; and when he left that situation in May or June 1815, he lost little time in joining the Navy, his entry date being June 21st.

Kaumualii at one time referred to George as his best loved son, but who was George's mother? Some writers state that it was Debora Haakulou Kapule, one of the king's many wives, and his last "queen" as an independent ruler of Kauai;¹⁷ however, records indicate that she and George were contemporaries.¹⁸ Lucy Thurston, missionary,

referred to him as an illegitimate son of a chief, who had been sent abroad to save him from a jealous wife.¹⁹ Her true identity has not been determined and it is now too late to do so.

To send such a small child around the world, separated from family and home, suggests that his father considered future benefits would be worth the venture. George, educated in New England schools, would be competent to conduct his father's business affairs with American sea captain-traders without benefit of translators and fear of being cheated. The father must have had confidence in the captain, James Rowan.

No stranger to the Sandwich Islands, James Rowan, as mate of the *Lady Washington*, visited these islands several times, and after Captain John Kendrick's death at Oahu, Dec. 13, 1794, Rowan sailed the brig to China. He returned to the Pacific as captain of the *Eliza*²⁰ and again as captain of the *Hazard*.²¹ Early in January, 1804, Rowan was off Kauai-Niihau for supplies and visited with Kaumualii.²² This probably was the time he took George aboard; he told Cotting he had had the boy near two years on the water. The *Hazard* returned to Providence early in July 1805.²³ Hawaiian crew members are known to have been lost overboard when the *Hazard* encountered a storm during this voyage. If other Hawaiians were on board, it would explain George's failure to learn English as he could communicate without learning the language. Perhaps Rowan, himself, had by that time acquired a working knowledge of Hawaiian.

George's return to his native land began on Saturday, October 23, 1819, at the Long Wharf, Boston; George was on his way home as guest of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. In the eyes of his fellow travellers on the *Thaddeus* he did not evince those pious attributes deemed desirable by such a godly company. Perhaps his service in the Navy fitted him more for the companionship of the forecastle. Or perhaps he felt that rules did not matter when one is on his way to claim a kingdom! He anticipated just such results for he promised Samuel Patterson the restoration of the latter's Oahu land should he return "when he (George) came to the throne?"²⁴

Nearly six months later when the brig dropped anchor in Kailua, Island of Hawaii, George went ashore in the first boat, probably anticipating claiming his kingdom. His high spirits must have plunged when he found his father was now only a tributary chief. True, he ruled Kauai, but orders came from windward, from Kamehameha II. George must have decided to make the best of

the situation for when the Hawaiian royal party came on board, he entertained them playing on his bass viol.

His romantic talents were demonstrated in his whirlwind courtship of Betty Davis, the half-Hawaiian daughter of Isaac Davis. George remained in Kailua after the missionary party had proceeded to Honolulu. Shortly after, he appeared in their midst with his new "rib," as he described his wife, having secured passage from Hawaii on the *Neo*.

Preparations were made to escort George home. A generous gift of useful articles, including the bass viol, was packed and missionaries Samuel Whitney and Samuel Ruggles accompanied him to Kauai. As the *Thaddeus* anchored in Waimea Bay, several of Kaumualii's men, one of whom spoke English, came on board. George concealed himself in the cabin, but was induced to come on deck. The king's men were surprised and pleased to learn that "Humehume" had returned. For the first time, George learned his native name. The messengers sped for the shore with the news, and a twenty-one gun salute from the brig was returned by the fort. The surf ran high that day and the travelers were obliged to land a half mile from the king's house. Crowds gathered on the beach and a passageway had to be cleared by the guards, who armed with clubs, beat back the curious.²⁵

An "affecting" meeting took place between father and son. Fifteen years before the son had left as a child; and for many of those years, the father had queried visiting captains: "Does my son live? Where is my son?" George soon learned what it was to be a prince: the valley of Waimea was his; the fort on the hill was his; trunks of clothes, a home and furnishings were his and his lady's²⁶

A king's gratitude to the captain of the *Thaddeus* was expressed in a gift of over forty large hogs, taro, sweet potatoes, yams and sandalwood. Gratitude to his friends, the missionaries, found expression in George's hospitality. They shared his board while they explored the island.

Several days after their arrival, Kaumualii sent for Samuel Ruggles, and asked assurance that they would stay to teach his people. One wonders if it was really to teach his people, or whether it was to teach him to trade advantageously. The father may have had doubts about George's business acumen. His remarks are poignant. "I want my son to help me, he speak English well and can do my business. But he is young, young men are sometimes wild, they want advice." He offered to make Ruggles a chief if he would stay to assist Humehume in trading ventures. Ruggles declined the

offer but did promise advice within limits.²⁷

Having been assured a return welcome and the protection of the king, Ruggles and Whitney left Kauai on June 21 for Honolulu for their wives.

Within two days of their leaving, Kaumualii as King of "Atooi and Onehow" and George as "Prince and heir apparent" entered into an agreement to furnish sandalwood to William Pigot and John Meek. This was to cover the purchase of sundry merchandise sold on June 23 and the balance due on the schooner *Bouchard*.²⁸

The princely manner was evident when the missionary family returned. George shared his table as a brother would; but he now had a cook, steward and nearly a dozen domestics.

Within a short time it became evident that George was not the son for whom Kaumualii longed these many years. His erratic behavior was reported by trader, sea captain and missionary. For refusing him a bottle of gin, Captain Marsters lost his dwelling houses and contents, \$2,500 worth—George had set fire to them. His father "made good" with a promise of two hundred and fifty piculs of sandalwood.²⁹ Few vessels left Waimea without experiencing some of his rascality. Accompanied by his band of wild fellows, he boarded the *Young Thaddeus* anchored at Waimea. His joy ride ended on the rocks and the vessel was damaged.

The trappings and title of "heir apparent" vanished, and he retired to secluded Wahiawa. This small valley contained about twenty habitations, about a hundred souls. When Reverend Hiram Bingham visited George in 1824, he found him living in an unkept native house.³⁰

Betty shared the downward path of her arrogant spouse. She was more fair and more slender than her countrywomen, and she had been attentive to the teaching of the missionaries. But her life differed little from that of the wife of a petty chief of low rank.³¹ Early in 1821 she was delivered of a son; and as she was very ill after her confinement, several different native women were called to care for him.³² About a year later, the child became ill and the parents appealed to the Whitneys for medical assistance. He was beyond help. In this time of sorrow George requested Mr. Whitney to conduct a service, prayer at the house and an address at the grave. Two by two, members of the procession followed the tiny corpse into the fort where a grave had been dug.³³ A daughter, born late in 1821, was given to a chief woman as George wanted no girls.³⁴ A third child, Wahinekipi, shared exile with her parents. In the cemetery of Maria Lanakila Church, at Lahaina, Maui is the

monument to Wahinekipi, daughter of George, who died 3 September 1843, age 19.

The death of Kaumualii in 1824 may have been an incentive for George to once more dream of ruling, or even more than dream, to take action. On the king's death, there was no princely inheritance for his son nor land for the dispossessed chiefs of Kauai, for Kamehameha and his son claimed all. George joined a party of malcontent chiefs in stealing into Fort Elizabeth overlooking Waimea Bay, before daybreak on August 8, 1824. He entered the magazine to supply his men with powder; then broke into the houses where arms were stored. Instead of securing the fort while the opportunity was theirs, they alarmed the garrison with their shouts and shots. Quickly repulsed, the rebel forces retreated about eight miles. An earthwork, protected by a small field piece, was erected at Wahiawa.

Kalanimoku, prime minister for the kingdom, who was visiting Kauai to settle affairs after Kaumualii's death, called on Oahu for reinforcements and in seven days he had a large force. On the 18th of August, the government forces marched to a valley about a mile and a half from the rebel encampment and a little before daylight attacked their position. Routed, George took to the mountains on horseback.³⁵ For nearly two months he evaded capture, but early in October the "royal prisoner" was brought to Waimea. When captured he was found senseless from liquor, perhaps having expected death with capture.

The closing years of his short life were spent in Honolulu. A comparison of two accounts of that life is interesting. Von Kotzebue who visited Honolulu in 1825 reported that Kalanimoku never lost sight of George, two guards always followed him, and that he would have been strangled if he attempted to escape.³⁶

Elisha Loomis, first missionary printer, has another version. He says that George was pardoned and only required not to absent himself from the suite of Kalanimoku without express permission. The kindness and generosity of the chief was the result of missionary influence. A victim of influenza, in May of 1826 George won release forever from his imprisonment.³⁷ His final resting place is not known.

NOTES

¹ *Religious Intelligencer*, 1816, Vol. 1, 142-143.

² *Ibid.*, 334-335.

- ³ Letter to author from F. Kent Loomis, Capt. (Ret.), Asst. Dr. of Naval History, Dept. of the Navy, 4/Dec./1969.
- ⁴ Thomas Manby, "Journal of Vancouver's Voyage to the Pacific Ocean . . .", *The Honolulu Mercury*, 1929, June, p. 23.
- ⁵ John Turnbull, *A Voyage round the World in the Years 1800 . . .* (London, 1818), p. 211.
- ⁶ *Religious Intelligencer*, p. 335.
- ⁷ *The Missionary Register* (London), February, 1818, p. 51.
- ⁸ Letter to author from E. M. Eller, Rear Admiral (Ret.), Director of Naval History, Dept. of the Navy, 19/Sept./1969; Sherwood Pickering, *Sea Fight Off Monhegan* (Portland, 1941), pp. 104-109.
- ⁹ Letter from F. Kent Loomis, 29/Oct./1969; Lt. Edward R. McCall's Report 7/Sept./1813 (Enclosure with Letter, F. Kent Loomis); Francis F. Beirne, *The War of 1812* (New York, 1949), p. 192; C. S. Forester, *The Age of Fighting Sail* (New York, 1956), p. 191-193.
- ¹⁰ Muster roll U.S.S. *Enterprise*, p. 136. (Naval records, National Archives, Washington, D. C.). A "landsman" was a new, inexperienced sailor.
- ¹¹ Muster roll U.S.S. *Guerriere*, p. 37. (Naval records, National Archives, Washington, D. C.).
- ¹² Muster roll Boston Navy Yard, p. 92. (Naval records, National Archives, Washington, D. C.).
- ¹³ *The Missionary Register* (London), February, 1818, p. 51.
- ¹⁴ *The Massachusetts Spy* (Worcester), Dec. 18, 1816.
- ¹⁵ Petition, Records of Legislature, 1811. (Archives, State of Massachusetts).
- ¹⁶ *The Missionary Register*, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁷ Margaret S. Williams, "Deborah Kapule: Kauai's Queen", *The Hawaii Weekly*, Aug. 23, 1953.
- ¹⁸ George was born about 1800 if he was four in 1804 when taken by Rowan; F. October, 1853, Obituary, Deborah Kapule. "Her age was about 55," hence her birth year was about 1798.
- ¹⁹ Lucy G. Thurston, *Life and Times of Mrs. Lucy G. Thurston* (Honolulu, 1934), p. 23.
- ²⁰ Judge F. W. Howay, "The Ship Eliza at Hawaii 1799", *HHS 42nd Annual Report*, 1933, 103.
- ²¹ Judge F. W. Howay, "A List of Trading Vessels. . .", *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3rd Series, XXV, 142.
- ²² Certification dated Jan. 2, 1804, James Rowan, Cap., Ship *Hazard*. (Ms., HMCS)
- ²³ *The Providence Gazette* (Providence, R. I.), July 8, 1805.
- ²⁴ Samuel Patterson, *Narrative of the Adventures and Sufferings of . . .* (Fairfield, 1967), p. 8.
- ²⁵ Samuel & Nancy Ruggles, "From a Missionary Journal", *The Atlantic Monthly*, CXXXIV, Nov. 1924.
- ²⁶ Thaddeus Journal, June 28, 1820. (Ms., HMCS)
- ²⁷ Ruggles, "Missionary Journal", p. 654.

- ²⁸ Note dated June 23, 1820. FO & Ex.
- ²⁹ S. E. Morison, "Boston Traders in Hawaiian Islands", *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, LIV, Oct. 1920, p. 39.
- ³⁰ Hiram Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands* (New York, 1848), p. 229.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- ³² Journal, Mercy Whitney, Aug. 31, 1821. (Unpublished ms., HMCS)
- ³³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 9, 1822.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1821.
- ³⁵ Hunnewell Papers, Vol. 1 (Photo copies, Bishop Museum)
- ³⁶ Otto Von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823-1826* (New York, 1967), II, 232.
- ³⁷ *Rochester Observer* (Rochester, New York), April 11, 1828.